

## Minutes of Health Working Group Meeting - North

Date: Thursday 10/September /2020

Venue: Tripoli UNHCR Office (Webex)



### Summary of Discussions and Action Points:

#### 1. Follow-up on action points from last meeting (Farah – UNHCR)

- Health partners supporting PHCs and dispensaries were reminded to follow-up on reporting by PHCs as well as referral of suspected COVID-19 cases for PCR testing.
- Partners were also reminded about the importance of applying COVID-19 precautionary measures inside PHCs including crowd control and the use of masks.
- A coordination meeting was held last week with key health partners and UNICEF RCCE focal person to discuss the challenges faced at the field level in terms of raising awareness and compliance of communities with COVID-19 precautionary measures. Key messages and suggestions will be shared with WHO and MoPH for their support and follow-up. MoM will be shared as soon as provided by UNICEF.
- Regarding the possibility to extend the working hours in some PHCs to cover the increasing needs, some PHCs already expended the hours; while others reported that this is not needed at the moment as the needs can be addressed with the current schedule.
- PHC quality task force meeting to be re-activated, UNHCR to send an invitation by end of the month.

#### 2. MoPH Updates (Ramia – MoPH)

- A memo was released by MoPH addressed to PHCs and partners supporting MMUs to ask them to return to their usual activities since the majority of PHCs within the affected area of Beirut port are now operational and able to address the needs of people living within their catchment areas.
- Provision of medication for MMU from PHCs: Ramia clarified that if the MMU is contracted with a PHC, the medication can be collected from the same center provided that the delivery of drugs must be registered on phoenix.
- Chronic medication: the issue of shortage in chronic medication at the PHC level was solved following the support from WHO. IMC T5 confirmed that their supported PHCs are still experiencing shortage as deliveries received are not complete in terms of quantity and type of items. Ramia clarified that the improvement in drug delivery will be noticed during this month. PHCs were asked to fill a template for missing items and share it with MoPH for replenishment.
- Vaccination: during the month of September a decrease in number of children vaccinated was noticed, hence a letter was sent to all PHCs to request further attention and prioritization of vaccination activities.
- Malnutrition: cases of malnutrition are growing and are expected to continue rising considering the current socio-economic situation. All PHCs were reminded to screen all children aged between 6 months - 5 years as well as pregnant and lactating women. MoPH have received Plumpy Nut and Plumpy Sub from UNICEF with Expiry date ending in November 2020 noting that till now there's no confirmation whether MoPH will receive new batches following that date.

IOCC added that many malnutrition cases among children above the age of 5 are being identified during field and outreach activities. Discussion at central level with UNICEF and MoPH is ongoing regarding the possibility of supporting malnutrition cases identified at the PHC with transportation fees, furthermore IOCC is planning to provide training sessions to OVs and CHVs so they can conduct malnutrition screening during their outreach activities. MoPH is now in the process of identifying a focal person for malnutrition cases at the ministry level.

UNHCR stressed the importance of supporting malnutrition preventive activities among vulnerable groups and conducting mass screening for early detection of cases. Furthermore, more efforts should be put to promote breastfeeding and report distribution of formula milk by contacting MoPH hotline.

### 3. COVID-19 Situation (Nohal – WHO) presentation attached

- The Health working group was briefed on Lebanon Health situation related COVID-19 and Beirut port blast and its impact on Health sector.
- Nohal briefed the WG about the Dashboard for isolation sites in Lebanon, can be access through this link: <http://bit.ly/isolationcenters>

### 4. COVID-19 Response (Farah – UNHCR)

- Rapid Response Team (RRT):
  - Farah briefed partners about COVID-19 Rapid response in the north. Health partners currently responding to covid cases are IOCC, PUI, IMC and MSF.
  - The geosplit for Health partners was recently updated.
  - IMC in T5 expressed their readiness to join the RRT in the north and respond to cases in T5 area.
- Hospital Expansion:
  - UNHCR is supporting the expansion of 2 Gov Hospitals in the north which are TGH and HGH. 2 prefab covid units in addition to ICU beds were provided to both hospitals noting that the expansion work in TGH is not implemented yet as the ICU is occupied.
  - UNHCR is looking into expanding a covid unit in Menieh Gov Hospital.
  - Bed occupancy in TGH and HGH is reaching 100% for regular beds and 100% in ICU beds in TGH compared to 50% in HGH due to lack of staffing.
  - WHO is planning to support with staffing for both hospitals. WHO and MoPH are also providing capacity building to hospital staff.
  - Farah briefed partners about MoPH plans for phase 2 where private hospitals will be activated and governmental hospitals will be converted to covid hospitals which will be very challenging in the north since both TGH and HGH are providing a wide range of medical services to vulnerable Lebanese and refugees.
  - 3 private hospitals in the north (Mounla, Haykal and SZH) as well as Bchareh Gov hospital started receiving covid patients and currently working on finalizing ICU beds.
- Isolation Facilities:

- Koura Residency: active in the last 2 months however, currently, not receiving new patients as the rental agreement will end soon. New cases are to be referred to Maarad facility.
- Tal Hayat Isolation Facility was activated 3 weeks ago.
- Abdel Aziz Isolation facility: almost ready to receive patients, pending identification of staff.
- Maarad facility: is currently active and receiving patients. The facility received medical equipment from UNHCR and will be receiving further support from Leb-Relief (funding from the Australian Embassy).
- PCR testing:
  - Some hospitals in the north are requesting PCR testing prior to admission to protect themselves and their staff from C-19, however, unfortunately these tests are not covered neither by MoPH nor UNHCR which is putting more pressure on vulnerable patients. The only guidance received from MoPH is to do chest CT-scan for urgent cases upon admission to the ER, otherwise, other cases (cold cases and deliveries) should be dealt with precautionary measures.

## 5. Partners' Updates on Activities (Health partners)

- IOCC:
  - IOCC MMU is currently responding to ISs and CSs in Akkar and T5 with some challenges related to medications.
  - The patient load in supported PHCs (Al Ghawth and SPL) is increasing after receiving referrals of NCD patients from MSF. The issue of shortage in YMCA drugs remains the same.
  - IYCF and PSS activities are ongoing remotely and through face to face sessions.
  - RRT is currently responding to a high number of Covid cases in the north where some challenges related to stigma and social tension are noticed in some areas in especially in Abou Samra which is pushing RRTs to work and provide assistance discreetly without drawing any attention.
  - IOCC is also supporting MoPH-ESU with contact tracing and referring suspect cases testing at Maarad Facility (on Tuesdays and Thursdays) and Tal Hayat Isolation Facility (on Wednesdays).
  - IOCC medical team in Tal Hayat Isolation facility is currently following up on 3 covid patients.
- PCPM:
  - secured funds from ICDF (financed by the Taiwan government) and the Polish aid to support at least 18 health facilities with disinfectants and PPEs (from which 1 is in Borj Hammoud, 1 in Aarsal and the rest in Akkar region). The distribution phase is starting on the 3rd week of October. 150 IPC kits will be distributed to vulnerable HH directly or through health facilities.
  - PCP is also supporting NDP Hospital and El Youssef Medical Center with 2 triage rooms in addition to 1 respirator for NDP.
  - Activities at Al Ataa' Al Jazil dispensary are ongoing with an increase of number of consultations.
  - PCPM MMU resumed field missions to nearby ISs.
- Mercy-USA:
  - Providing support to Tal Hayat Isolation facility with raw food material for the period of 3 months.
  - Mercy-USA MMU is currently providing pediatric consultations in Wadi Khaled till end of 2020 (free consultation + provision of acute medication).
  - 1 MMU was deployed to support people affected by Beirut port blast for the period of 1 month. this activity was coordinated with a group of volunteers. Counselling and chronic medications were provided to vulnerable people affected by the blast.

- IMC:
  - Under GAC funds 2 new PHCs were added in Akkar (Akkar El-Aatiqa Municipal Social Health Center and Maternal & Childcare Municipality center in Meshmesh) in addition to 2 PHCs in T5 (Deddeh Medical Centre in Koura and Hanane Al Sultan PHC in Minieh).
- PUI:
  - 1 staff tested positive in one of PUI supported PHCs in Akkar, all PHC staff were tested for COVID-19 and waiting for the results.
  - Disability program will be initiated soon providing same services as IMC disability project. More details will be shared once the implementation starts and more coordination is required between IMC and PUI to avoid duplication of services.
- MSF:
  - In light of the closure of MSF clinics, the number of opening days was reduced. DAZ clinic is now opening on Mon, Wed and Fri and Abdeh clinic on Tue and Thu.
  - MSF RRT home visits are ongoing.

## 6. AOB

- Order of Malta: will soon mobilize a new MMU in T5. It will be based in Khaldieh PHC in Zgharta. The MMU schedule will be shared once finalized.
- IOCC: IYCF SOPs were updated by IOCC and MoPH.
- UNHCR-WASH: Elie provided updates on the second wave of IPC kits distribution. Currently, 3 health partners are willing to support (MSF, IOCC and PUI. IPC kits will be available at UNHCR warehouse as of next week, delivery to partners will start the week after. Each targeted family should receive 6 soap bars, 1 gallon of bleach, 1 menstrual hygiene kit and 2 bottles of hand sanitizers (500ML each) from UNHCR in addition to 5 cloths masks (for members above the age of 6) from UNICEF.

<b>Action Points</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Focal Point</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
1.	Health partners supporting PHCs and dispensaries to follow-up on reporting by PHCs as well as referral of suspected cases for testing	Health partners	Open
2.	Health partners supporting PHCs and dispensaries to ensure that PHCs are applying covid19 precautionary measures including crowd control and use of masks	Health partners	Open
3.	PHC quality task force meeting to be re-activated	Farah – UNHCR	Oct 2020
4.	WHO to share list of equipment provided to hospitals to avoid duplication	Katia – WHO	Oct 2020
5.	WHO to share the updated COVID-19 guidelines on PCR testing, breastfeeding and deliveries	Katia – WHO	Oct 2020
6.	MoPH to share the list of malnutrition centers	Ramia – MoPH	Oct 2020

7.	IOCC to share the updated version of IYCF SOPs	Ghoufran – IOCC	Oct 2020
8.	UNHCR to share the link for the dashboard of isolation sites	Farah – UNHCR	Completed
9.	PCPM to share the MMU Schedule	Hanane – PCPM	Oct 2020
10.	Order of Malta to share more details about their MMU in T5	Nelly – Malta	Oct 2020
11.	WHO to share the guidance on using Masks for children	Nohal – WHO	Oct 2020

### List of Participants

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